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enabled it to be cast out bodily and rendered harmless. The peach in China and the Far East generally is a fairy fruit, and charms are made of peach wood or peach stones. It is also an ancient belief in China that peach wood is a defence against evil spirits. The modern "gate gods" are simply pictures pasted on the gate to keep out demons, but they were originally painted on peach wood boards hung upon the gate.

The Min Chia also believe in poltergeists, a belief shared by their Yunnanese neighbours of all tribes. During the time I was in Ta Li I was not able to hear of a local poltergeist, although I was told that some years before one had been active in a certain village not far from the city. But in 1937 the city of Li Chiang, just beyond the Min Chia country to the north, was the scene of poltergeist manifestations which attained a considerable local celebrity. The home of a rich family of merchants of that city was almost entirely ruined by these long continued destructive attacks. The family, forced to abandon the house in which mysterious fires would break out in unlikely places, or stones coming flying through the air, left a few faithful members to guard against robbers and attempt to detect the "ghost" in the act, if it should prove to be after all a human enemy. The priests of all local religions, Lama Buddhists, Taoists and others, were invited in to exorcise the ghost, and altars with their incense and offerings were placed in every room. The manifestations continued for more than eight months, and when I visited the house late in 1937 it was virtually ruinous. Much of the woodwork was burned or charred, even under the eaves and high up on the walls, where the fire can only have been applied by a torch. The doors and window lattices were smashed and scarred by stones, and these lay in heaps in the courtyard. It was said that one fire had broken out the previous night, and we were shown the spot, under the roof ridge, which was indeed charred and still smoking slightly.

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makes the Christian reflect again how Christ's teaching of God as the Heavenly Father is the beauty and the strength of Christianity. The Chiang idea of God makes a wonderful forerunner to that greater one, which Christ gave to men.

God, in his nature, is thought of as spotless in holiness or purity, and in his character as the righteous governor of the universe. He searcheth the hearts of men. He finds out if they are white or black, i.e. good or evil. To the repentant suppliant he extendeth sacrificial mercy; to the evil doer retribution according to his iniquity.

The White Stone and the altar provide tangible evidence of these conceptions. Since God is holy, the sinner may not approach him before he is ceremoniously cleansed. A sin-bearer is, therefore, necessary to remove his sin. On it falls the divine judgement. A spotless bullock, or lamb or fowl is the victim. When its blood has been shed the way is open for prayer and supplication.

The origin of this crucial ceremony no Chiang can give. It has been observed, all say, from time immemorial. They regard it as an all-important divine requirement. Aged priests, deep in the religious lore of their race, which is handed down from generation to generation, unanimously maintain this. The whole purpose of sacrifice, they say, is the removal of sin to secure the divine blessing. Its substitutionary character is never questioned but strenuously maintained. Without the shedding of blood there can be no remission of sin, and apart from that even the priests dare not presume to pray.

It is useless for any one to try to discount this belief of theirs. Some who, from prejudice, would fain read out of it this substitutionary meaning charge us with reading into it preconceived ideas of sacrifice taken from the Old Testament. But love of the truth must state exactly what the facts are. And it is not fiction but fact that the Chiang do thus interpret the meaning of their sacrifices. God, they believe, meets them at the altar, and no where else, because there sin is cleansed away.

That salvation by substitution happens to be an Old Testament and a New Testament doctrine only enhances the interest of the Christian in the Chiang ritual. Yet the interest or the wonder does not end here. There is something more wonderful still, so wonderful, that at first, one can hardly believe his ears when he is told of it. They solemnly assert that their sacrifices are only provisional: they are but the semblances of a supreme sacrifice yet to come. How can the critic account for this? Let who will question the asseveration, the proof again is overwhelming.

A divine agent is to come from Heaven to be The Great Sin-Bearer. When he appears the reality of their sacrifices will be accomplished. This future Sin-Bearer even now comes as an unseen Presence to the Grove to put through their petitions for

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them. He is regarded as the Interpreter of all that takes place in the sacred grove and as The Agent who mediates between them and God.

At every sacrifice, accordingly, the priest has a sacred symbol of his presence, and this symbol is given a personal name. It is a roll of white paper in the form of an ancient book. Every priest guards his Roll with the most zealous care and regards it with the utmost veneration. No stranger is allowed to see it and no worshipper may even touch it. Neither will any priest tell an outsider of its existence. Without the presence of the Roll all sacrifice would be in vain. For it signifies the virtual Presence of the Heaven-Sent-One at the altar. Indeed he and the sacrifice are one.

[212] Originally the Chiang had their own scriptures, or writings. With the loss of the knowledge of letters, what was once a sacred roll of their law is now only a mere cylinder of white paper. But it preserves the form. It represents the reality. This explains their veneration for it. The roll denotes the spiritual nature of their offerings to the Father of spirits. They are offerings of righteousness consummated by the Heaven-Sent-One through his death for man's sin.

That he has to die for this purpose the priests take care to signify in a very unusual way: a small skull, or death's head, is inserted in the upper end of the sacred Roll. No one unitiated in the mysteries of the white religion would ever guess its meaning there. A second look has to be taken before indeed it is seen. The figure of death is embedded in the volume. This intimation is so plain that it is unmistakable. Even though it be surmised that the roll was originally without this tangible interpretation of its meaning, nevertheless the innovation reveals plainly the thought of the death of the Sin Bearer from Heaven as commonly held by all Chiang priests.

The writer has one of these rolls with the death's head in his possession. At the decease of an old priest who had it, a Christian Chiang secured it for us from his family.

The messianic message in the fortieth Psalm strikingly corresponds in thought to this age long aspiration of the Chiang, as evidenced in their Sacred Roll, and the mind of the man must be very dull that does not marvel at the closeness of the correspondence. "Sacrifice and offering", it says, thou hast no delight in; mine ears thou hast opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo I am come; in the Roll of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart". (R. V.)

The name of the divine Sin Bearer is also arresting: it is so like that of Jesus. The sound varies in different localities but the correspondence is close. In one place it is "Nee-Dsu", in a second "Je-Dsu," in a third "Rhe-Dsu" and so on. This can be put

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down to coincidence, of course, but its designation can hardly be that. It is known as Abba Malah. Abba means Father: here, the Father in Heaven. Malah is not known otherwise than as a name. They do not seem to be able to define or explain the term, But the pronunciation is very precise. The "lah" is spoken with a definite click, so much so that it is virtually Malak, the Hebrew word for Angel. Have we not in this another strong indication of the Semitic origin of the Chiang religious beliefs?

In connection with this Sacred Roll and angel-Sin-Bearer or Redeemer the student of scripture inevitably recalls the many instances in the Old Testament of the mysterious angel-visitant appearing as God in human form to patriarchs, prophets and saints in times of stress and difficulty. By Isaiah he is called "the Angel of His Presence who saved them ":" in His love and in His pity He redeemed them, and He bare them, and carried them all they days of old. (Isaiah, 62; 9). In Malachi, 3; 1, "He is called the Lord whom ye seek, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in."

This delight of the Israelites for their Malak or Messenger of the covenant has a remarkable parallel in the fondness of the Chiang for their Abba Malah or Je-Dsu. They speak of Him in the possessive sense. The prefix of "ga-gee" goes with His name: "Ga-gee Je-Dsu" they say. The sentiment is that of the Christian hymn, "My Jesus I love thee, I know thou art mine."

Among Chiang Christians when the hymn "Jesus loves me" is sung the use of their own name "Je-Dsu" in place of the Chinese "Ye-Su" adds great zest to the singing. Every face then shines —every face is, as it were, a glistening white Stone.

At festival times the sacred roll is carried by the priest to the grove on a platter, where its base is embedded or planted in seed wheat. The emphasis is on the seed. The interpretation is not far to find when taken with the use to which this seed wheat is put. It is that death forms the prelude to life, a belief which the Chiang firmly hold. This will become plain as we proceed.

In some places the seed-wheat is carried separately to the grove, but at the grove the sacred roll is placed in it.

Where strict orthodoxy prevails there are three religious festivals in the year. The first occurs at their old New Year time, which falls on the first day of the tenth moon of the Chinese calendar. The second comes in the Summer and the third in the Autumn. But the dates vary according to the locality and even may be changed a little, as exigencies of weather and social conditions indicate.

In numerous places now only one religious festival is held in the year; in other places two. Uniformity has lapsed. Even in exact ritual procedure it is not found. One district has preserved customs and conceptions that another has let go or forgotten.

For private sacrifices there is naturally no set time. These

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783 arise with the need or the occasion or the mood of the person offering. But in public or private worship there are extraordinary times when both are conducted on an extended or greater scale.

Public worship takes place in the sacred grove, and each village or set of villages has one of its own. Private worship begins on the house top with sacrifice and is continued in the home below.

783 783 In all worship a priest invariably officiates. He is essential to its proper conduct. An ordinary individual dare not take the honour on himself of presenting the blood of sacrifice: that is the prerogative of the priest set apart for the purpose. He it is who superintends the whole ritual, checking error, enforcing decorum, explaining its necessity and significance, and leading in the prayers made after the sacrifice.

The office is generally handed down from father to son. One generation initiates another. When the pupil is proficient in the knowledge of the nature and significance of the various rites he will be called on to perform, he undergoes a careful ordination. But he must be able to get married, and the marriage ceremony may be the closing act in the ordination. Single men cannot act as priests, lest taint or auspicion should rest on any one performing this holy office.

The ordination takes place in the grove. For the ceremony all the priests in the neighbourhood assemble. In company with any laity who desire to attend they form a procession that starts up the hillside as dusk draws on. Along the route fowls are sacrificed one after another to ensure a continuous dripping of blood from the start to the finish. Immediately the blood ceases to drip from one fowl it is thrown aside and another killed to maintain the cleansing of the path of the novitiates. It is a strange performance doubtless, only it sets forth in no uncertain way the emphasis that is laid on blood, and hence calculated to make men think of its necessary meaning even while it serves as a shock or challenge to man's aesthetic sense. Which same thing also the Jewish ritual continually did.

On the mountain the probationer bathes in a stream to rid himself of all bodily defilement and dresses himself in cleansed garments. A lamb on the altar is sacrificed in the usual way. The blood is sprinkled on the White Stone, the Sacred Tree, The Altar and all around. Oil or fat is put on the new priests head and the night-long chantings, prayers and drum beatings varied by intervals of rest proceed.

Next day each new priest has a lamb sacrificed on his housetop in front of the Whits Stone and Sacred Branch. At the conclusion of the accompanying prayers he may don the priestly garments and wear the priest's hat. He is now officially recognised as competent to undertake all sacerdotal duties connected with his office, whether in public or in private offerings.

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As a priest there is one thing he must not do: he must not change the intention of the sacrifice. Sacrifice may only be made for the one express and divinely ordained purpose of the remission of sin. It can not be turned aside to any other or made to any one but God. His duty is to maintain and enforce this original end, or otherwise he renders himself liable to the penalty of death.

We confess that the first time a priest voluntarily gave us this information we were surprised to the point of wonder, yea, and of admiration. For it revealed to us the intensity of their great central belief that their sacrifices of propitiation were not man-invented but God-born.

Everywhere the same insistence is made on the due order. Their chantings and prayers include an avowal of faithfulness in this respect. God is invoked to remember that the blood of the sacrifice is presented by his set command as made known to their fathers. Simultaneously the ancient priests are cited as witnesses that they have been stedfast to the rule of faith handed down by them.

Once at a High-place sacrifice, friction which arose among the worshippers led to certain irregularities and lack of reverence in the making of the offering, That same year, men noticed that death claimed the majority of the wanton offenders. This may have been a coincidence, of course, but the reason believed was because they sinned with a high hand.

But the surprise created by the staunchness of the Chiang to the faith of their fathers leads to a distinct shock when it is seen that the priests have allowed strange accretions and realistic amplifications to creep into parts of their ritual and profession which degrade its pristine purity. For instance the skull in the sacred roll obviously is an innovation to give it a dramatic presentation. The horned skin cap of the priest is declared to have replaced by a plain shaped felt one with a circular brim. And a number of priests, not all, have copied some of the customs of the Chinese exorcist. Worst of all, spiritism, in some parts with its customary admixture of real phenomenae and base trickery, has crept in. The investigator, even while he laments these excesses, has to take note of them. All is not pure gold that glitters. There may an alloy in it or it may be a base metal of the same colour. One has to distinguish and care is needed at every turn. Patience and caution are often necessary to disentangle the real from the simulation and what constitutes the old true-Chiang religion from its present day admixture of spurious elements.

It has to be remembered that during the reign of the Emperor Chien Long, A. D. 1736-1796 the Chiang suffered complete loss of political liberty. Then idolatry was forced on them at the point of the sword. Temples, never before seen on their mountain sides and plateaus, were wantonly built all through their territory. Since then a slow decadence has been noted in their worship. The

that the presence of these oddities and occult claims does not lessen our admiration for the better class of priests who despise the use of such fraudulent practices in their profession. They refuse to stoop to these mountebank tricks and schemes for the sake of gain but trust to the all-merciful power of a benign God to meet the ills and needs of men. To them God is very real.

Few priests to-day wear a distinctive dress. There used to be priestly sacrificial garments; there is one in the West China Union University Museum, which we procured for it. This one shows a kind of back-plate ornament which is peculiar. Of its significance we remain so far in entire ignorance and until we find a clue there is no use making a guess at it. Nowadays priests mostly perform their sacrificial duties clad in the common white robe of the worshippers.

At the sacrifice in the grove only men are allowed to attend. Mixed worship is forbidden. Distance is no excuse, and nothing save bodily infirmity may deter the heads of households from being present. Worship is congregational and not to take part makes one a religious reprobate.

Elders or leaders of good repute are appointed in turns to see to all the necessary arrangements. It falls to them to select the ram or he-goat. This is done ten days ahead of time. It must be perfect in every part, body, legs and horns. And it must be white. If a wholly white animal cannot be found, a white cock is offered to atone for any spot or imperfection in colour. It is led home the day before and washed. To augment its cleansing it is next bathed in incense which is of cypress twigs. Then it is tethered in a clean place until wanted.

A new and unused rope is used to lead it to the altar. The rope, too, has to pass through the sanctifying fumes of the incense, and afterwards it may not be used for any profane purpose. A special honour rests on the person chosen to lead the victim to the grove. He is always some one reckoned worthy among his brethren. It falls to him to slay the sacrifice, and he receives an extra portion of the divided meat.

Three days beforehand the worshippers cleanse their bodies, wash their clothes and make themselves ready. No pungeant herbs such as garlic or onions may be eaten then or anything regarded as unclean. Even smoking is meantime prohibited. If possible, all go clothed in white. The very poor may wear dyed garments if they are cleansed and they have no other.

The road along which the victim is led to the grove only the worshippers may tread. No others that day may appear thereon, for that day it is sacred. Should any one inadvertently be met on it he must offer a special sacrifice to make amends for his trespass.

No outsiders are permitted to witness the New Year sacrifice. No Chiang even who are not participants are allowed near. The roads and approaches to the grove are carefully guarded against

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casual visitors or curious spying. None are supposed to approach the holy place except sharers in the sacrificial offering.

The procession towards the grove begins about nine or ten o'clock at night. The white clad participants carry torches or lanterns. One carries the sacred roll reverently on a basin or platter of wheat seed. This, at least, is the custom in some parts. In others the wheat seed is taken separately in the priest's pouch to the grove and then poured around the sacred roll on the basin or platter. A halt is made before arrival to re-sanctify the lamb. Water is now, curiously, poured into or over its ears, over its back and legs as a sort of baptismal ceremony. Note is taken whether the animal, under the douching, shakes itself or not. If it does, that is taken as a sign of its fitness; if not, it is unhesitatingly rejected. Naturally a healthy lamb does shake itself and the ritual goes on. A third cleansing or sanctification of the lamb is gone through on its arrival at the grove.

The rule in every observance is, "holiness unto Abba Chee." Worshippers, vessels, utensils must be cleansed. The lamb requires to be perfect. God is a God of purity. Nothing evil or unclean can come before him. Heaven is a pure land. They who seek life there and the divine blessing here cannot obtain such apart from sacrificial purification. These repeated cleansings leading up to it all signify this ultimate purpose in the Chiang worship.

A white banner with a miniature bow and arrow on it is raised on the altar. The white roll is placed directly before the White Stone. A large cake of unleavened bread and a jar of wine are placed beside it. The priest takes his station. A fire is lit in the centre of the open space. These preliminaries over, the ritual begins.

Its opening is announced by the discharge of a small three chambered gun, used only for this purpose. The gun originally was of brass. The writer has part of an ancient one in his possession. Now they are made of iron.

The worshippers now kneel together as the priest begins his chants and prayers. He keeps time with a small drum. Je-Dsu, the angel overseer of all that is done, looks down to see that the hearts of those present are sincere. If not, the reputed punishment is liability to transfixion by a "brazen" arrow from heaven. A special awe, therefore, rests on every worshipper.

At the conclusion of the initatory chants a remarkable ceremony takes place. The priest or "Be-bo" burns incense of cypress twigs and enshrouds the White Stone in a cloud of fiery smoke. The background established, he, removes the rope from the lamb. The rope is wound around the vessel that to receive the blood. He and the elders now kneel and place their hands on the head of the victim. Afterwards all who have specially prepared themselves do the same.

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796 783 After this solemn act of the transference of their sin to the lamb he recites an intercessory prayer. It begins with a triple ascription to God and goes on to invoke him to see and hear that they have assembled to offer sacrifice. He pleads that, "The offering of a lamb has been perpetuated from of old and the paying of vows from former generations. To offer sacrifice is not our invention, it was established in ancient times. This altar of the Most High opens the gate of heaven and the way of sacrifice. It leads men to pay their vows. The leader of the lamb has brought it thither. One hundred and ninety-two pairs of white banners show forth the purity of the altar, and signify that God is pleased to accept the offering. "O ye our ancient priests witness that our offering is very pure, and that it is not our own instituting, but has been from of old. In paying our vows we have eaten nothing offensive for three days, nor gone to any unclean place. We have come to the sacred grove; we have placed in position the vessel for the blood; we have led the lamb thither; we have untied the rope and bound it around the basin; the arrow of the bow we now unloose; we slay the lamb on this floor; O God of heaven come down, come down as we offer it to thee. Thou Yather of Spirit come to our grove. If our garments were not clean we would not dare to wear them; if our shoes were not clean we would not dare to put them on; if our hats were not clean we would not dare to use them; if our backs were not clean we would not dare to bear the drum; if our hearts were not sincere we would not dare to pay these vows or pray these prayers. The grass is in the blood basin; the bread and wine we have brought to our God; Oh, regard the slayer of the lamb and the priest as without sin and undo the sin of all present. We sprinkle the blood to atone for our iniquities; O God accept our sacrifice."

The arrow is now removed from the bow on the White Banner and the lamb slain.

The original practice was to kill the lamb by a brazen arrow, this being the symbol of judgment. But now a knife, the property of the priest, is used. On the handle glitters a white stone or a white bone ornament. The priest hands the knife to the leader of the lamb. The lamb's head is drawn against some one's knee. Another grasps its legs firmly. One thrust of the knife is made and the blood flows into a basin. With a wisp of grass it is sprinkled on the altar with its bread and wine and through the cloud on the White Stone and White Banner and on all sides.

The White Banner with its arrow spent is immediately removed and inserted beside the White Stone because the White Stone is the emblem of the divine holiness.

The action denotes that this is an offering in righteousness. That which their Abba Chee desires is presented before Him. Their plea for mercy is the spent arrow. For in its discharge sin was judged. Since punishment has been meted out to sin, as evidenced

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by the blood they sprinkle before him, they now ask for the remission of iniquity and transgression, which the goodness of God directed them to seek.

A paring from the hoof, the ears and the genital parts of the victim are burned on the altar, apparently as an act of consecration. The undivided horns are presented, but afterwards taken home. An ear is placed on the point of a staff and set up. The head, heart, liver and kidneys, with the flesh of the animal are consumed by fire.

The priest at sacrifices, other than the New Year sacrifice, which is the greatest of all, receives the shoulder or foreleg and breast and skin. Then the worshippers divide up the flesh among themselves. No stranger may eat of it for it is holy. The intestines are cleansed, minced, cooked and eaten with unleavened bread. It is their sacrament. Each worshipper drinks a small cup of wine.

The procedure varies somewhat according to locality. There is no exact uniformity found in the details of procedure. Each district has something of its own in the way of observance. But in the main the order follows a general line which is the same everywhere. Nowhere is sacrifice spoken of as the propitiation of Heaven or of God by man. It is necessary to draw attention to this point. The Chiang know nothing of this heathen doctrine. According to their belief God does not require to be placated. They regard sacrifice as divine and celebrate it as such. The celebration they call "the paying of vows," for this represents their concern in it. For in paying their vows they pledge themselves to God's will and service, which is what God requires of man. He provides the sacrifice; they accept it by vowing to him their fidelity.

The remarkable thing is that bands of these men in the stillness and darkness of midnight meet to worship God in this way, and have done so for over two thousand years in West China. They believe they meet God here. He comes near to them in the person of their angel Je-Dsu. The light of the sacrificial fire, reflected in the glistening whiteness of their White Stone, symbolises His glory. It is their Shechinah. They cannot interpret this with the precision that we should wish, but they are under no two opinions that this sacrificial light represents to them the shining of the divine effulgence.

Here we Christians feel that we stand with them on holy ground and would willingly remove the shoes from our feet. Very solemn and awful is the floor on which they thus worship. Who dare call this litholatry? The man who would is utterly devoid of soul—a hopeless Canaanite in heart and mind.

St. John in his vision of things in Heaven was carried away in spirit to a great and high mountain, where he was shown the holy Jerusalem descending out of Heaven from God and having the glory of God. Her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. The city had no need of

755 liturgies, take the straw man and a sheep to the cross roads. He kills the sheep, spreads its blood on the straw man and the flag, and then burns them. This means that the straw man, representing the devil of illness, is sent away and that the sheep has died in the place of the patient. Everything in the belly of the sheep is thrown away. The tuan-kung takes the sheep's head, its hind legs, and its skin.

People do not invite a tuan-kung for a Poison Devil disease which is not very serious. They treat it only with the night-watching method called muzee-kue dze. The treatment begins by washing the patient's wound with water. Then, mix flour with that water to make a human figure. Cut a corner off the patient's clothes, take a head scarf and some hairs, and put them all on a plate. Build a fire outdoors and put the plate beside the fire. Also ask a hunter to wait behind the house to shoot the animal that happens to approach the fire. Even a valuable domesticated animal is not to be spared. An animal that has been shot must be traced and brought back, and must not be left to die in front of some other person's house. If no animal comes after long waiting, shooting the flour man or a whirlwind can also be effective.

•783 777 Expelling Bad Luck--When the Ch'iang of Li-fan have bad luck and do not know what to do, they invite a tuan-kung to perform magic for them so as to expel the bad luck. This method is called "pil-wara" in the Ch'iang language. It begins with the host preparing two pints of buckwheat flour. The tuan-kung first mixes the flour with water to make various images of gods, which are kept at home; he then makes five mountains with flour and three double-leaf flags with paper. He takes the host's hat, a belt and a sun cake, and puts them into a basket. /21/ Besides, he also takes the host's accounting book, farming tools, and other important things, and with his helpers, moves them several miles away from the house. Finding a proper place where he can see mountains and streams, the tuan-kung sits cross-legged on the ground. He takes the flour mountains out of the basket and arranges them in a row on a paper. Then he builds a fire, burning pine branches. He now starts his magic performance, chanting liturgies, beating the drum, ringing the bell, inviting his old Master, calling the names of the gods of the five mountains, and reading aloud the host's age, name, and misfortunes. If the magic is effective, the weather will change at this moment, -- the wind may blow or a rain may fall. The tuan-kung watches the paper on which the five flour mountains are placed to see what (besides living things) has fallen on it. No matter whether it be an

783 777 inanimate fallen leaf or some dust gathering there, he takes it, wraps it up, and puts it into the host's hat. He also picks some stones or mud from that place to fill up the host's belt. Beating the drum, the tuan-kung returns home. As he reaches the door, the host purposely closes it and refuses to let him in. The tuan-kung will ask, "I am the richest and most honored. Now I have come. Why don't you open the door?" Inside the house, an eloquent person, who is called pil-kuai-tchuai, has been chosen and he will converse with the tuan-kung through a hole in the door. He will ask, "The host is in need of a certain thing. Have you brought that with you?" The tuan-kung will answer, "Yes, I have it here. Moreover, I have brought even better ones." Thus they ask and answer dozens of times. Each time when a certain thing is mentioned, it is handed in through the hole. At last, the tuan-kung will ask, "Have you finished?" The person inside will say, "Yes." Then the tuan-kung enters the door and, chanting liturgies, bows to all the gods inside the house. Later he burns a pine branch before the altar of the Old Master. He takes out four wool threads. First, he has them smoked over the burning pine branches; then he rings the host's neck with three threads, which means that, from now on, the host will be no longer at a loss to make up his mind. The remaining thread is bound on the host's left wrist, which means that, from now on, the host's limbs will be steady and will not fumble. When the service is done, relatives and neighbors will send gifts to congratulate the host who will entertain them with the gifts. For three days, the host will not spend anything of his own. (Everything comes in and nothing goes out.) And the tuan-kung stays three days with him.

Things like difficulties in breeding pigs, trouble in raising chickens, poor taste of the home-brewed wine, poor flavor of the preserved vegetable, fallen ears of grains, and frequent robbery and burglary are regarded as the bad luck of women. The tuan-kung can also be invited to expel such bad luck. In the Ch'iang language this is called i-dé-wara. (I-dé means the food in storage under women's care; wara means calling.) The rites are the same as for men, only that the tuan-kung will not go up to the mountain to perform the rites but stay in the farm. On his return, he delivers things to the store-room. Women often object to the performance of such rites because they consider it a disgrace to them. (6) /The number

6. Various relationships between women and agriculture can be seen from this rite. We will analyze it later when we discuss the social system of the Ch'iang.

783 777 is missing in the text. I presume this is the appropriate place for Note 6. --translator's note./

Exorcism and Fecundity Rites-- These two rites are held continuously. The term "fecundity rites" is not current in Chinese usage, and is adapted by this writer from the French term "Les rites de fécondité." For example, in India the Farming Festival during the spring 783 (7) is a fecundity rite of the agricultural people. The Intichiuma in

7. See Briffault, Sex in Religion.

Australia is a fecundity rite of the hunting tribes. (8) The Ch'iang

8. See R. Kréglinger, L'evolution religieuse de l'humanité, 1926, p. 59-60.

have a similar rite, which is called yu-si (redeeming the chicken's vow) in the Ch'iang language. It is held once every three years. The major part of the ceremony of redeeming the chicken's vow is also the ceremony of private sacrifice to the White Stone God in every family. As to the rites of exorcism, they are regarded as a preparation for the ceremony of redeeming the chicken's vow, that is, before the ceremony starts, the house must first be cleaned and unlucky things in the family removed. This rite which the Ch'iang call yu-li bu-de, also has its basis in theology. (9)

9. This kind of rite is called "Les rites preliminaires." (See R. Bastide, Elements de sociologie religieuse, Collection Armond Co[illegible]-90.)

These two ceremonies are conducted by the tuan-kung. Exorcism is held any day after the 15th day of the eighth month. On that day the tuan-kung prepares a sheet of white paper, several sheets of five-colored paper, and a pint of buckwheat. He also makes a big piece of bread, binds a bunch of grass (representing the ancestral ghosts capable of making trouble), carves a piece of wood, and puts all of them on the food. While the tuan-kung is chanting liturgies, the host fries the buckwheat, kills a sheep, spreads its blood on the bunch of grass, /22/ cooks the mutton on the stove and invites his relatives to come to eat and drink with him. Having finished his chanting, the tuan-kung, carrying a drum, goes up the roof. He is followed by his clansmen, each carrying a weapon (rifle, gun, stone, thorn stick, etc.) The tuan-kung burns pine branches before the White Stone God and chants exorcising liturgies called mä-nä. At

• 783 the end of each passage of the liturgies, he shoots once with the gun. Having finished chanting, he dances down the roof. All the people strike aimlessly with their weapons and yell as they come down the roof. When the tuan-kung passes by the cattle ranch, he chants the ranch code (dă-ti). Then beating the drum and ringing the bell, he reaches the cremation ground. He piles together the bunch of grass stained with the sheep's blood, the piece of wood and the fried buckwheat, and burns them. He cuts one half of the bread and scatters it in different places to feed hungry ghosts. Returning home, everyone washes his hands with clean water before the door. The tuan-kung pacifies all the gods (All the Ch'iang gods must be invited) and begins to drink. He orders that from now on, unclean persons (those include the redeeming sons, persons who have a child died or born recently in their families, etc.) will not be allowed to go up the roof and he fixes the date for redeeming the chicken's vow.

One day before the date for redeeming the vow, the tuan-kung comes to the house of the host to select a chicken for sacrifice and has paper, bamboo, fir wood and so on ready. In the afternoon, he climbs up the roof to plant the fir wood, sets up a sacred table, arranges the offerings, and puts four cups in front of the table. One cup is for worshiping the monkey-headed Old Master. Of the remaining three, one filled with sheep's dung represents cattle-raising; one filled with dust from eaves represents an old house; and one filled with clean water represents cleanness. As the tuan-kung is beating the drum and chanting the liturgies, one man shakes eze-ge ra and, in turn, overturns the clean water, the eave dust, the sheep's dung, the meat, and the bread. When he is overturning the meat and the bread, the people present all throw out the grains they have been holding in their hands. Then they divide the bread among themselves and eat it. After eating, they follow the tuan-kung and take a young female sheep up to the roof. The tuan-kung burns pine branches before the White Stone God and chants liturgies. Then, using a burning pine branch, he burns part of the wool off the sheep's head, tail, and back. After that, the tuan-kung prays, "From now on men will prosper and so will cattle. One produces ten and ten a hundred." The sheep is renamed hitu-tze-mu. And then both men and sheep come down from the roof. When they get outdoors, the tuan-kung, beating the drum and chanting the liturgies, cuts the skin of a sheep's ear and spreads the blood on a prepared bunch of grass and flags. He plants the flags on both sides of the door; the bunch of grass is also planted beside the door. The sheep is not to be killed, sold, or made a sacrifice, but to enjoy a natural

death. Having completed the ceremony and returned home, the tuan-kung washes his hands outdoors. Then he enters the house, sits beside the fireplace, and has his meal. After the meal, he begins 783
to make flags and cuts paper flowers. Flags are planted on a bushel. The monkey head and offerings are put in place. Chanting liturgies, the tuan-kung takes the flags and plants them in front of a straw mattress. He wraps the chicken's feather in paper and hangs it on the top of a flag; on the top of another flag, he also hangs the chicken's feather, the bow, arrows, and other things. Having done all these, the tuan-kung, chanting prayers, begins to offer sacrifice for redeeming the vow. All people gather and drink. Then they make offerings to the God of Wealth, the Sheep God, the Door God, and the ancestors. The chicken offered to the Door God can be killed and its blood is spread on the flag. The chicken offered to the God of Wealth and the Sheep God must be crushed to death. Before dawn, the host carrying the chickens, incense, candles, etc., follows the tuan-kung as he dances from the fireplace up to the roof. Up on the roof, first a gun-shot is fired. Then the host strangles the chickens. After finishing his chanting of prayers, the tuan-kung gets ready the offerings to the White Stone God, hangs a flag on a piece of fir wood, and pastes the chicken feathers on the wood. After three days, the wood is moved and planted on a good farm. The chicken feathers used in the sacrifice are thrown on the farm.

The above-mentioned practice has probably had a long history. 539
The Ch'iang have an old folk song as follows:

"The Ch'iang people worship god, and to make the sheep and
chicken vows, they hire a tuan-kung;
The sheep vow to clean the house, the chicken vow to clean
the house and the cattle ranch.
As dirt is cleaned out, all is purified and the water is clean;
The God of Heaven, the God of Earth, come all to enjoy!"

/23/ Divination-- The Ch'iang practice divination with sheep's 787
thigh-bone, egg, or white dog. First, the sheep's thigh-bone divination:

Foretelling with the sheep's thigh-bone is called tchi-pü-sze in the Ch'iang language. Very few tuan-kung know the method of divination. Nowadays only the tuan-kung around P'u-ch'i-kou in Li-fan can still teach it. However, only one out of four or five disciples may have the opportunity to be instructed. All the magic words will not be taught even to the most reliable disciple until he holds his